

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 108

By Gilmore

A RESOLUTION to honor the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

WHEREAS, the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies was established at Vanderbilt University Divinity School in honor of the late Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, Sr., who served as assistant dean at the school from 1968 until his death in 1984; and

WHEREAS, perpetuating Rev. Smith's legacy of theological and academic excellence and prophetic witness, the Kelly Miller Smith Institute works to bring together the African-American church community and African American educational institutions as partners with Vanderbilt University Divinity School to study and research issues important to the practice of faith and ministry in the African American church; and

WHEREAS, the Institute is a vehicle for generating scholarship on the single most important institution in the African American community, sharing that research through conferences and workshops, and enriching research opportunities through a dialogue with lay and clergy leaders in America's African American churches; and

WHEREAS, as a center for research and praxis on issues of ideology and ministry in the African American church tradition, the Institute focuses on: the education of clergy and laity for leadership in ministry; the promotion of dialogue between African American theologians and African American church leaders; and the development of research materials on the history of African American religion in America, leadership in African American churches, and African American church theology; and

WHEREAS, the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies sponsors study forums, clergy and laity study retreats, and conferences for the purpose of examining the critical social ministry needs of the African American community; and

WHEREAS, as part of the Vanderbilt University Divinity School, the Institute is an important resource for bridging African American church studies and theological education of African American laity and clergy for leadership in the ministry and recently launched a five-year program to reshape its African American studies curriculum; and

WHEREAS, throughout the past twenty-five years, the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies has offered unique research and collaboration opportunities that have improved the spiritual life of countless citizens and the entire State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize and commend the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on Black Church Studies on the celebration of the institution's twenty-fifth anniversary and offer our best wishes for its every continued success in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.